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Mr. F. G. Melby is another of our landscape painters who, to perhaps a lesser extent than Mr. Martin, possesses the characteristics of the "Poet School" of Art. The gentleman has on his easel a picture of "Thunder Cape, Lake Superior," which has many really fine points. The time chosen is sunset, and over the tops of the mountainous shores, which girt the lake at this point, are heaped a mass of fiery, stormy sunset clouds, while the foreground water is ruffled and agitated, breaking against the sides of the staunch little steamer in the middle distance with angry and defiant spleen. Mr. Melby has treated his sky with great breadth and feeling, the luminous atmospheric effect of sunset being well rendered; the cliffs are also excellent in color, character and effect, while the steamer is full of motion and action. The foreground water, however, is not so good; in it, to make a stupid and obtuse joke, Mr. Melby seems to have been "all at sea," and, although the effect of light is cleverly treated, the waves are altogether too stiff and hard to meet with unbounded praise. For all this the picture is a great one, and possesses to a great extent a feeling of poetry and sentiment which marks Mr. Melby as a promising disciple of the New School.

Mr. J. B. Irving has on his easel an exquisite little *genre* picture which he calls "The First Born." We all know, or at least have heard of, with what tenderness and love the young mother regards her first born, how she humors its every whim and pours out upon it the stream of maternal affection with which her young heart is swelling over, how she dandles it on her knee, kissing and caressing the little innocent in her rapturous ecstasy, while on her face beams a smile of ineffable tenderness and joy. This is the sentiment Mr. Irving has endeavored to depict on canvas, and he has succeeded admirably. The mother, the child, are both excellent and would almost tempt one into matrimony, were it but to see that smile of happiness reproduced in nature.

The French painters are preëminent for their treatment of drapery, but it would appear that in Mr. Irving we have growing up in our midst an artist who in time will fairly rival them on their own ground. The drapery in this picture is painted with a delicacy and finish which is simply superb, resembling more the work of Wilhelm, the greatest of modern drapery painters, than that of an American artist. The accessories, too, are excellently painted, while the whole picture is full of pure, luminous color.

The National Academy gave a reception on Thursday evening of last week, which I have heard was well attended, the display of pictures being quite creditable, but as the Secretary neglected to send cards to this office, it is, of course, impossible to notice the exhibition in these columns.

Mr. H. W. Derby reopened the old Somerville Gallery, 845 Broadway, last week with the collection of pictures belonging to Mr. Wright of Weehawken. Among the pictures exhibited are Rosa Bonheur's celebrated "Horse Fair," Gaillet's "Last Honors paid to Counts Egmont and How," Eastman Johnson's "Old Virginia Home," Cropsey's large picture of "Indian Summer" and many other valuable works. I hope to give an extended notice of the collection at some future day.

PALETTA.

#### MATTERS THEATRIC.

Probably one of the most difficult tasks that could be set a man, would be to write a dramatic article for the present week, containing anything new or original. Tantalus-like, the critic stands and looks forward with eyes of longing to the coming week, when we are to have the "Merchant of Venice" at the Winter Garden, produced in a style which is to surpass any of the former efforts in the way of scenic display that have yet been attempted at this establishment.

At Wallack's "Ours" still maintains its reputation as a "crack" organization, while half the young ladies in town are going into ecstasies over Mr. Wallack's excellent acting and beautifully curled whiskers.

At the New York Theatre poor "Cinderella" still weeps over her woes in very stupid language and equally bad music, Mark Smith is as funny as ever, and *la belle* Hinckley is correspondingly beautiful. At this establishment there is some promise of novelty, a new Parisian play, which is the synonym for *légèr* costuming, entitled "The Bird of Paradise" being announced as in preparation.

At the Broadway Theatre the Worrell Sisters are drawing good houses, performing a round of amusing burlesques, singing songs, dancing hornpipes, playing banjo solos and enjoying themselves generally. At this establishment also we are promised a novelty in the shape of a mysterious melodrama, the main incidents of which are said to be wonderfully startling.

Putting a girdle round about the earth in considerably less than forty minutes, and jumping in one line from America to England, I am happy to record the unbounded success of Mrs. John Wood on the London boards as Leander in the "Invisible Prince," her performance in that part having received the approbation not only of the critics but of the public at large.

The only event of real interest that has occurred during the week was the presentation to Mr. Booth of a testimonial medal on Tuesday evening. The extract, from the *Daily Times*, given below will explain the whole affair. It is seldom that extracts from other papers are made in this column, sweet reader, but in the present instance your humble and devoted servant is laboring under so severe an attack of "Lack of Novelty," that he must claim your indulgence, and hope that you will be content to remain satisfied with his promise to be a "better boy" next week.

WINTER GARDEN.—Nothing is so encouraging to art as the encouragement of artists. After the curtain had descended on the last act of "Hamlet," the audience was treated to a series of Danish airs, and then arising again, displayed the scene set, in the centre of which stood a small table, upon which was a gold medal, the gift of sundry gentlemen represented in a Committee, who were upon the stage.

Mr. Fullerton, the Chairman of the Committee, advancing toward Mr. Booth, handed him the medal, and said:

MR. BOOTH: You have deservedly won a position in your profession which few men have ever attained. The representation of one of Shakespeare's plays for one hundred consecutive nights, to overflowing and delighted audiences, is a triumph unrecorded in the annals of the stage until you accomplished it, and is well worthy of com-

memoration. But it is not alone your success as an actor which has attracted public attention, and called forth this demonstration. You have won alike the applause and respect of your fellow-men, and a numerous body of your friends and admirers, through their Committee now here present, desire to present you with some evidence of their appreciation of your genius as an actor, and their respect for you as a man, more substantial and enduring than the fleeting, though hearty plaudits nightly heard within these walls. To that end they have instructed me to present you with this medal. Intrinsically it is of little worth, but as a token of the regard of your fellow-citizens, it possesses a significance far more valuable than the gold of which it is composed, or the artistic skill which has beautified it. It was thought proper, Sir, that this presentation should take place on the occasion of the play of "Hamlet," with which your name will ever be associated, and on the very spot of your greatest professional achievement, thereby affording your numerous friends an opportunity of witnessing it. But the time and place chosen for this ceremony have another and a deeper significance. They are intended as a recognition of your life-long efforts to raise the moral standard of the drama, and to encourage you in your future efforts to accomplish that result. In conclusion, Sir, I beg you to accept this gift, and at the same time allow me to express the universal wish that you may live to win new triumphs in a profession which your virtues have elevated and your talents adorned. [Applause.]

Then, taking the medal from the box, he advanced a few steps, and placed it around Mr. Booth's neck, amid the immense applause of the audience. When this had in a measure subsided, Mr. Booth replied as follows:

GENTLEMEN: It is impossible for me to respond in fitting terms to the very graceful, eloquent and very complimentary words just spoken. And yet while accepting the beautiful token of your appreciation of my professional merits, I am proud to accept your estimation of me as a man. It behooves me to say that I am thankful. "Beggars that I am, I am poor in thanks." Accustomed as I am to conceal my own feelings beneath the player's mask, I find it difficult to give expression to my feelings. Therefore, I beg you will receive these three simple words—I thank you—the very utmost of my ability in speech-making, as the sincere, though humble, expression of a grateful heart.

Then turning to the audience he said:

"To you, ladies and gentlemen, to whom I owe so much, who have so generously, so nobly sustained me, I beg leave, likewise, to tender my most grateful acknowledgments. The debt I owe you can never be paid, but I trust to future endurance as an actor, and in my conduct as a man and fellow-citizen, ever to deserve your confidence and support."

The Committee then retired to an ante-room to partake of a supper gotten up for the occasion.

The medal is oval in form, surrounded by a serpent. There are emblematic flowers at the base, the skull of Yorick, two foils crossed, and the raven. In the centre, Booth's head as Hamlet; at the top the Danish Crown, from which hang two wreaths on either side of laurel and myrtle. The pin from which the medal hangs has in the centre a head of Shakespeare, on each side Comedy and Tragedy. The motto is: "*Palman qui meruit ferat.*" The superscription on the back is:

"TO EDWIN BOOTH, in commemoration of the unprecedented run of 'Hamlet,' as enacted by him in New-York City for one hundred nights."

At the close of Mr. Booth's remarks the curtain fell amid a perfect burst of applause that called and recalled him to acknowledge the courtesies of the house.

SHUGGE.